

Express Mail #EV161246977US
Atty. Docket 26881 USA

1

**SHADOW BOX HAVING MULTIPLE DISPLAY
SURFACES AND SHADOW BOX KIT**

Field of the Invention

This invention concerns shadow boxes for the display of images and articles in an aesthetic context.

Background of the Invention

Shadow boxes are used for the display of items such as images (for example, photographs, prints or paintings), objects of memorabilia, as well as figures, scale models and landscapes intended to recreate, in miniature, historical, dramatic or mythological scenes or tableaux. Shadow boxes provide a device for isolating and illuminating the scene or items being displayed in order to focus attention on the display and establish a context in which the scene may be advantageously and favorably viewed. The shadow box may be distinguished from merely framing an image such as a photograph in that it provides additional depth which changes the lighting incident on the display and provides foreground and background regions for positioning of the image with other objects comprising the display.

Shadow boxes are typically pre-designed and constructed in finished form in conjunction with a particular display. There is clearly a need for a shadow box, either pre-assembled or unassembled in kit form, which the consumer can easily assemble and create a customized display.

Summary and Objects of the Invention

The invention concerns a shadow box comprising a first display surface having a first perimeter and a second display surface having a second perimeter. A viewing aperture extends through the second display surface and is defined by an aperture perimeter. The second display surface is positioned substantially overlying and in spaced relation to the first display surface. A portion of the first display surface is visible through the viewing aperture. A frame assembly surrounds the first and second display surfaces and engages the first and second perimeters. At least a portion of, but preferably the entire aperture perimeter, is inwardly disposed in spaced relation relative to the frame assembly. The frame assembly maintains the display surfaces in the overlying spaced relation. Preferably, the frame assembly comprises first and second frames having substantially the same size and shape so as to fit in overlying relation with one another.

The invention also encompasses a kit for constructing a shadow box. Preferably, the kit comprises a first display surface having a first perimeter and a second display surface having a second perimeter. The second display surface has a viewing aperture extending through it defined by an aperture

perimeter. The kit also has a frame assembly engageable with the first and second perimeters of the first and second display surfaces. The kit components are adapted so that the first and second display surfaces are positionable in overlying spaced relationship with one another with the first and second perimeters engaging the frame assembly. The second display surface is positionable with at least a portion of the aperture perimeter inwardly disposed in spaced relation relatively to the frame assembly. Preferably, the frame assembly is comprised of a plurality of elongated members which may be assembled end to end to form two frames which are positionable in overlying relation one atop another.

It is an object of the invention to provide a shadow box having multiple display surfaces.

It is another object of the invention to provide a shadow box kit which can be assembled with multiple display surfaces.

It is still another object of the invention to provide a shadow box or a shadow box kit wherein the multiple display surfaces are positionable overlying one another with portions of both surfaces simultaneously visible.

These and other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent upon consideration of the drawings and the detailed description of the preferred embodiments.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a shadow box according to the invention;

Figure 2 is an exploded perspective view of the shadow box shown in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a sectional view taken at line 3-3 in Figure 1; and

Figure 4 is a perspective view of an alternate embodiment of a shadow box according to the invention.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

Figure 1 shows a shadow box 10 according to the invention. Shadow box 10 comprises a base or background display surface 12 having a perimeter 14 which engages a background frame 16. A foreground display surface 18 is superimposed in overlying spaced relation with the background display surface 12 on the opposite side of background frame 16. The foreground display surface 18 also has a perimeter 20 which engages both the background frame 16 and a foreground frame 22, the foreground and background frames together forming a frame assembly 24 to keep the foreground and background display surfaces in overlying spaced relation with the foreground display surface 18 being sandwiched between the frames 16 and 22 as best shown in Figure 3.

As shown in Figure 1, the foreground display surface 18 has a viewing aperture 26 defined by an aperture perimeter 28. At least some portion of the aperture perimeter 28 is inwardly disposed in spaced

relation away from the foreground frame 22 to define the foreground display surface 18. Preferably, the entire aperture perimeter is inwardly disposed as best shown in Figure 2. The viewing aperture 26 may constitute as much as 50% or more of the area of the foreground display surface 18. A portion 12a of the background display surface 12 is visible through the viewing aperture 26 (see Figure 1). As shown in Figure 4, embodiments with a plurality of viewing apertures 26 are contemplated as within the scope of the invention.

Preferably, as shown in Figure 1, the foreground display surface 18 is substantially the same size and shape as the background display surface 12. This relative sizing allows the display surfaces 18 and 12 to be positioned substantially aligned with one another so as to present a substantially continuous external perimeter bounded by the foreground and background frames 22 and 16, which are preferably also substantially the same size and shape so as to be positioned in an aligned, overlying relation matched to the perimeter of the display surfaces 12 and 18.

By positioning the display surfaces 12 and 18 in spaced relation to one another, the shadow box 10 provides a region of depth in which items, such as image 30, may be mounted on the background display surface 12 while other items 32 may be mounted on the foreground display surface 18 to construct an aesthetic display bounded by the frame assembly 24. Items may also be mounted directly on the outwardly facing surfaces of frame 22. The spaced relation of the display surfaces 12 and 18 produces a two-tiered effect

enhancing the aesthetic aspects and interrelation of the display items.

While the shadow box 10 may be provided pre-assembled as shown in Figures 1 and 4, it may also be provided as a kit, illustrated in Figure 2. Preferably, the kit includes the background display surface 12, the foreground display surface 18, and a frame assembly 24. To provide an inexpensive kit which is easy to assemble, the frame assembly 24 preferably comprises separate background and foreground frames 16 and 22, although a unitary frame assembly (not shown) is also feasible wherein the foreground display surface 18 is received within a slot located between opposite surfaces of the unitary frame. The frames 16 and 22 may comprise elongated members 34 which are joined end to end to construct the frame.

As suggested by the dotted lines in Figure 2, the background frame 16 is positionable overlying the background display surface 12 and engaging its perimeter 14. The foreground display surface 18 is positionable in spaced overlying relation with the background display surface 12, and the foreground frame 22 is positionable overlying the foreground display surface 18 and engaging its perimeter 20. Preferably, the frames 16 and 22 and the display surfaces 12 and 18 are compatibly sized and shape so as to be positionable in alignment with one another, as best illustrated in Figure 1.

Preferably, the display surfaces 12 and 18 are comprised of paperboard and the frames 26 and 22 are formed of wood so that the shadow box 10 may be

assembled using common, readily available adhesives such as water soluble white glue or aliphatic resins, also known as carpenters' glue. Use of these materials also keeps expenses down and facilitates attachment of images 30 and items 32 to the display surfaces. Other materials, such as plastic resins, plastic sheet materials and metals are also feasible for both the frames and display surfaces.

Shadow boxes according to the invention provide an inexpensive display device which may be used instead of simple framing to create an enhanced aesthetic context for the display of images, memorabilia or other items.